



## TSC – NOTES FOR RACE OFFICERS

These notes are written for the guidance of volunteer race officers, especially those who are less experienced, with a view to establishing a commonality of good quality practice for the benefit of all sailors. Running a race can be very enjoyable and it is hoped that these notes will assist.

### 1. Before Racing

- Take a look at the weather forecast. Suggest [www.windfinder.com](http://www.windfinder.com).
- Before leaving for the RIB, ascertain the numbers of boats intending to sail. Racing will only take place if 5 or more boats have indicated their intention to race.
- If less than 5 boats are present, advise helms that there will be no racing, but an informal sail will take place instead. The intention is that this will in effect be a coaching session. Where possible try to pair up experienced with inexperienced sailors.
- As no race officer will be required for this, feel free to sail yourself.
- If 5 or more boats are prepared to race, then proceed as below.
- Note wind speed and direction. Consider whether the Committee Boat needs to be moved in order to set an appropriate start line and course. **(See below).**

### 2. At the Committee Boat

- If after heavy rain, pump out the bilges
- Relocate the Yellow Peril (Committee Boat), if necessary
- Identify the necessary kit from the shore bag
- If available, locate the electric hooter, connect the battery and test. Otherwise, locate alternative audible warnings, eg, a whistle
- Check communications with the rescue boat(s) on channel 06
- Consider best how to make use of the available sailing time. For example, if it is not necessary to beat back up Woodrolfe Creek, then racing may continue a little longer than otherwise.
- Finalise your course and post on the metal display. Try to achieve an approx. lap time of 20mins, and a race length of 40-50 mins each (for first boat) when 2 races are scheduled, a little less if there are 3. Make sure you include 'start/finish' as the last mark. This enables you to shorten course.
- There is an inflatable buoy stored on Yellow Peril, which can be used as an addition to the permanent marks. This can be especially helpful as the windward mark after the first beat.



- Decide on your start line and place an outer limit mark if necessary, with the aid of the rescue boat. Where possible the line should be square to the wind. Use the burgee to help achieve this.
- Never use a mark of the course as an outer limit mark.
- List the boats racing, with sail numbers and names of crew(s). If unsure of any names ask the rescue boat to ascertain details. This is important for accurate results compilation
- Cadets may also be joining in with Sunday racing. A Cadet co-ordinator may also be present on the committee boat, but if not take care to ensure that:
  - There is sufficient rescue boat cover
  - That all cadets racing are identified and recorded
  - Whether cadets should sail a shorter race in order not to delay racing. For instance, by sailing a shorter number of laps
- Identify the following flags and place on the halyards:
  - No 1 Pennant (5 min)
  - P Flag (4 min)
  - Answering Pennant (postponement)
  - X Flag (individual recall)
  - First Substitute Pennant (general recall)
- Also have available the S flag (shorten course)
- Given that sailing time is limited by the tides, it is important to start racing as close to the advertised start time as possible. Whilst it is the responsibility of competitors to arrive at the start line in good time, where conditions are difficult it may be appropriate to ask the rescue boat to assist by towing. This towing should be offered to the least experienced helms first. Otherwise, it is not necessary to await the appearance of all intending competitors before starting the sequence below.

### **3. Start Sequence**

- Once the Start Sequence has commenced, the Racing Rules of Sailing apply.
- Each flag is accompanied by a sound signal. Times are taken from the flag, not the accompanying sound signal.
- The Answering Pennant is for use in case a postponement becomes necessary during the sequence. This could be for any reason, including:
  - A wind shift requiring the start line to be relaid
  - A sudden deterioration in conditions that would warrant a delay
  - A boat in difficulties requiring the aid of the rescue boat
- If there has been a postponement, when all clear, remove the Answering Pennant and make a sound signal. Time 1 minute then recommence the sequence as below. Otherwise:
  - The Start Sequence is as follows:



- 5 minutes to start, warning. No 1 pennant raised and sound signal
- 4 minutes to start, preparatory, P flag raised and sound signal
- 1 minute to start, P flag removed, long sound signal
- Start, No 1 pennant removed, sound signal
- Sight along the start line to observe any boat crossing the line early. If so, make one sound signal and raise the X flag. Advise the offending boat or boats to restart.
- If several boats start early and cannot all be identified then a **general recall** is necessary. Make TWO sound signals and raise the First Substitute Flag. Advise all boats to return. In order to recommence the start sequence, remove the First Substitute with a sound signal. One minute later commence the start sequence (as above) again.
- Record the start time

#### 4. During the Race

- Keep an eye on the time and on how far behind back markers are becoming. Shorten course if appropriate by raising the S flag with **two sound signals**. This should be done as the lead boat rounds the mark immediately before the finish line. It is normal to shorten at the end of a lap at the start/finish line, but shortening may be done at an earlier mark between the rescue boat and that mark.
- Observe for any boat in difficulty and radio the rescue boat to attend if they are not already doing so.

#### 5. At the Finish

- Sight along the start/finish line and make a sound signal as the first part of each boat crosses the line, whilst recording the sail number and time in minutes and seconds.
- No sound signal should be given for any boats that did not respond to an individual recall. However, record the time in case of any later dispute.
- If there is to be a further race with a different course, draw attention to the change and ensure all boats have had a chance to record the new details.
- For any subsequent race, recommence the start sequence as soon as is practical.

#### 6. After Racing

- Retrieve the outer limit mark and stow away on Yellow Peril.
- Relocate Yellow Peril on its mooring, if necessary.
- Pack away flags and course markers.
- Disconnect the hooter battery and stow away.
- Repack the kit bag and return along with the results.



- Hand results sheet to the Dinghy Captain/Results Compiler.

## **7. Finally**

Thank you for your efforts, hope you had a good day.

### **NOTES ON SETTING COURSES**

The normal pattern for a race course is for a beat to the first mark, with roughly equal distances of beats, reaches and runs. The object of this is to be fair to the different classes of dinghy likely to be racing.

On an average day, with two races scheduled, a race of 5 or 6 marks (including re-crossing the start/finish line) of 2 laps is generally appropriate for a 40 – 50 minute race for the first race. If three races are scheduled, aim for a 25 - 35 minute race time, subject to conditions.

If setting the same mark twice in a lap, the side of rounding each time **MUST** always be the same.

A course will be workable when an imaginary string if drawn round the marks and tightened touches all the marks set.

Try to achieve a balance in terms of numbers of tacks and gybes required when rounding.

Dependant on wind direction, it may well be necessary to move the committee boat to achieve a good beat for the first leg. In practice, the 'club line' is rarely usable.

Set a start line of appropriate length for the number of boats racing.

Different courses for each race are generally preferable.